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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JACKY ROSEN, a Senator from the State of Nevada.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Spirit, who directs the paths of all who love You, in this season of peace on Earth, we thank You for Your word and for the eternal truths that guide us day by day. Thank You, Lord, for another day with opportunities to make a difference in Your world. Thank You also for the sureness of Your presence that brings us peace in the midst of this world's turmoil. Lord, teach us to turn to You so that Your thoughts can become our thoughts and Your ways our ways.

Be for our Senators a refuge and a fortress, and may they put their trust in You.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, December 1, 2022.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable JACKY ROSEN, a Senator from the State of Nevada, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Ms. ROSEN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADERSHIP TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Jerry W. Blackwell, of Minnesota, to be United States District Judge for the District of Minnesota.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

RAILWAY LABOR MANAGEMENT DISPUTE

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, yesterday, the House of Representatives passed a joint resolution that will ensure our railroads continue to operate and our economy continues to function as the holiday season commences.

Last night, I invoked rule XIV to place that resolution directly onto the legislative Calendar. Senators are working morning, noon, and night to reach an agreement for us to act on

this measure ASAP. The Senate cannot leave until we get the job done, and Democrats will keep working with Republicans to find a path forward that everyone can support.

One of my top priorities is holding a vote to provide rail workers with the paid sick leave many of them have asked for. I support paid sick leave. My Democratic colleagues support paid sick leave, and we want to see it included in the package. We hope some of our Republican colleagues will join us.

Forcing workers to choose between their health and their livelihoods is unacceptable, and for that reason, Democrats—myself included—think it should be included.

One thing is certain—one thing is certain—time is of the essence. A rail shutdown is set to begin December 9, but the truth is, we need to resolve this impasse well in advance of that date.

Suppliers and businesses across the Nation are going to begin shutting down operations soon if they think a strike is imminent. They are not going to wait until December 9. They are not going to put something on a railcar in Seattle on December 7 that may be stuck in Peoria on December 9 because there is a rail strike, even when it is headed, say, to the East Coast. So for the suppliers and businesses, the date, the drop-dead date, if you will, before damage occurs is a lot sooner than December 9. And there would be painful disruptions to the economy before December 9 if we didn't act soon.

The consequences of inaction would be severe: unsafe drinking water, unusable gasoline, shuttered powerplants, and a crippling shutdown of passenger rail across the country. And those are just a few of the myriad of problems, serious problems, that would occur if there is a rail shutdown.

In that scenario, nobody wins; everybody loses. So the responsible thing to do here is to move forward and do everything we can to include paid sick leave. Again, we must keep working until the task is complete.

• This “buller” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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